

Message Text

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ACTION AF-18

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 AID-20 IGA-02 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07

H-03 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-07 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01

SPC-03 SS-20 USIA-15 CU-04 A-01 OPR-02 DRC-01 SSO-00

/123 W

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P 151438Z MAR 74

FM AMEMBASSY LAGOS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 3157

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE LAGOS 2205

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, NI, US

SUBJECT: EMBASSY PROTESTS ATTACKS AGAINST USAID

REF: LAGOS 2151

SUMMARY: EMBASSY PRESENTED LOW-KEY PROTEST TO MEA MARCH 15, ELICITING COMMENT THAT MEA ITSELF "NOT HAPPY" OVER ATTACKS AND INSTITUTING ITS OWN INVESTIGATION. END SUMMARY

1. AS ANTICIPATED REFTTEL, POL COUNSELOR MARCH 15 DELIVERED NOTE TO ACTING DIRECTOR AMERICA DEPARTMENT MEA (OBE) REGRETTING PUBLIC ATTACKS ON USAID BY NIIA DIRECTOR GENERAL ONWUACHI. IN COURSE DISCUSSION, POL COUNS ADVISED OBE THAT EMBASSY NOT PLANNING RESPOND PUBLICLY TO CHARGES, AND PROMISED PROVIDE MEA FURTHER INFORMATION AS RECEIVED. (CONVERSATION PRECEDED RECEIPT STATE 51809.)

2. OBE REMARKED SPONTANEOUSLY THAT MEA WAS "NOT HAPPY" ABOUT ONWUACHI'S PERFORMANCE AND HAD NO PRIOR INDICATION HE WAS PLANNING LAUNCH ATTACKS ON US. AT SPECIFIC DIRECTION OF MEA PERMSEC IYALLA, TELEGRAM WAS SENT TO NIGERIAN EMBASSY WASHINGTON MARCH 14 REQUESTING INFORMATION RE ALLEGATIONS MADE

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BY ONWUACHI. OBE PROMISED TRANSMIT OUR NOTE TO IYALLA PROMPTLY.

OBE CONCLUDED BY REMARKING THAT "EMBASSIES OF FRIENDLY COUNTRIES SHOULD NOT BE SUBJECT TO EMBARRASSMENT", AND EXPRESSED REGRET THAT INDICENT HAD OCCURRED.

3. WHEN POL COUNSELOR MENTIONED THAT EMBASSY WAS CONSIDERING RAISING QUESTION DIRECTLY WITH ONWUACHI IN ORDER PROVIDE HIM WITH FACTS ON IBRAHIM CASE, OBE EXPRESSED SOME UNCERTAINTY AS TO WHETHER THIS WAS WISEST COURSE TO PURSUE THOUGH HE SPECIFICALLY DECLINED TO ADVISE EMBASSY IN THIS REGARD. HE OBSERVED THAT MEA MIGHT ITSELF CALL ONWUACHI IN FOR DRESSING--DOWN IF FACTS OF CASE DEMONSTRATED THAT ONWUACHI'S ALLEGATIONS WERE UNFOUNDED, AND WONDERED ON PERSONAL BASIS WHAT EMBASSY COULD GAIN BY MAKING ITS OWN APPROACH.

4. COMMENT: IN LIGHT OBE'S REACTION, WE WILL DEFER PLANNED APPROACH TO ONWUACHI ON THIS ISSUE AND SIMPLY LET IT COME UP IN CONVERSATION WHEN HE IS NEXT IN TOUCH WITH EMBASSY OFFICER ON SOCIAL OR OTHER OCCASION. WE WILL NOT COMMUNICATE FURTHER WITH MEA ON THE SUBJECT UNTIL WE HAVE CHANCE EXAMINE DOCUMENTS BEING BROUGHT BY MCKEE. REQUEST ACCOUNT ANY CONVERSATION(S) BETWEEN DEPARTMENT AND NIGERIAN EMBASSY ON THIS SUBJECT.
REINHARDT

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